OFFICE OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES COMMISSIONER

2011-2012

ODA Accessibility Plan

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Introduction

Each year, the Government of Ontario sets a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Every ministry participates through its annual accessibility plans, as required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is Ontario's roadmap to become barrier-free by 2025. It includes accessibility standards in:

- customer service
- information and communications
- employment
- transportation
- the built environment.

This year the accessibility plans will help to inform planning requirements under the new Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) enacted last summer under the AODA. The IASR requires the Government of Ontario to develop a multi-year plan to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

Our annual accessibility plan outlines the specific steps the government is taking to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Building on last year's plan, our 2011-12 accessibility plan will continue moving the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner toward the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

To view other ministries' Accessibility Plans, visit Ontario.ca.

Section One: Report on Measures to Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers in 2010-11

The Government of Ontario is working to achieve an accessible province by 2025.

In 2010-11, the government continued to comply with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service regulation and continued to implement initiatives to enhance accessibility in other areas: employment, information and communication, transportation, the built environment and procurement.

This document includes a summary of the initiatives the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner implemented in 2010-11.

Customer Service

In 2010-11, the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner (the Office) trained all its staff on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard, including:

- All staff must communicate and interact with any person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability (e.g. TTY line) at all times.
- New staff members were encouraged to familiarize themselves with the AODA.
- All staff members took the "How May I help You" training module as part of their Performance Development Plan.
- Staff members were reminded that policies, practices and procedures must be compliant with the Act.
- Staff members were made aware of how to respond to persons with disabilities who use assistive devices, such as usage of own personal assistive devices, wheelchairs, scooters, voice activated computers, guide dogs, etc.
- When needed, Notices of Service Disruptions were posted in a timely manner, consistent with regulatory requirements, in a traffic area where they would be seen, to ensure that both the public and OPS staff were made aware of disruptions in services normally used by persons with disabilities and any alternatives that were available throughout the disruption.
- The Office has developed a complaint/feedback form for the general public. We encouraged the general public to comment as a form of quality control mechanism. The public can file complaints in person at the Office, by telephone,

internet, standard mail, and/or e-mail. So far, the Office has not received any complaints or feedback from either the general public or OPS staff.

Information and Communications

- The Office's Communications Officer incorporated accessibility considerations into the preparation of communications materials and ensured that communications products were accessible to everyone.

- The Communications Officer also ensured that printed materials and materials posted on the Office website were accessible to all and in compliance with the AODA.

- New and updated information regarding the AODA received by the Office were distributed to all staff as soon as the material was received.

Employment

- The OFLSC as a Crown agency, worked closely with Ministry of Government Service (MGS) Recruitment Centre to eliminate all potential barriers in its employment policies, processes and practices.

- As part of the hiring process, the Office informed the candidate(s) that accommodation was available on request during the entire hiring process.

Built Environment

- Since the first Ontario French Language Services Commissioner took office in November 2007, a "buzz" button has been installed to assist members of the public with reduced mobility.

- The entire office space was designed to be wheelchair accessible. Each individual office space was also designed to be wheelchair accessible.

Other

- OFLSC staff took all mandatory courses to familiarize themselves with the AODA and are up to date on the required training. The Communications Officer is involved with the Web Committee so that the office is up to speed on any new AODA requirements.

Section Two: Measures Planned for 2011-12 and Beyond

This year, the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner's accessibility plan focuses on five areas. These initiatives will support compliance with the existing Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. They will also help us enhance accessibility in other areas:

- Employment
- Information & Communications
- The Built Environment, and
- Procurement

Customer Service

The Office is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities receive accessible goods and services from us. This means they will receive goods and services with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

- Our Office will continue to review and follow policies, practices, procedures in accordance with the guidelines coming from the Diversity Office and from the Ministry of Government Services (MGS) to ensure compliance with any new requirements.

- Our Office will continue to ensure that all staff communicate and interact with any person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability (i.e., TTY line, etc.) at all times.

- Our Office will continue to ensure that all new staff takes the necessary training, such as the "How May I Help You" modle, to familiarize themselves with the AODA.

- We continue to ensure that any new office policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration, equality and opportunity as set by the Diversity Office and by MGS directives.

- Our Office has not developed any new policies, practices or procedures in 2011-2012.

Information and Communications

The Office of the French Language Services Commissioner is committed to making government information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. The information we provide and the ways we communicate are key to delivering our programs and services to the public.

- Our Office will continue to monitor and require staff to incorporate accessibility considerations into the preparation of communications materials to ensure that communications products are accessible to everyone.

- Our Office is committed to preventing any possible barriers to persons with disabilities when conveying information (in any method) to the public.

- Our Office will continue to ensure that all staff members are kept informed of new directives/best practices, as they are received.

- Our Office will continue to dispatch amended information coming from the Diversity Office to staff without delay.

- Our Office will continue to keep staff up-to-date on possible barriers and edit and/or modify communications products to ensure there are no barriers to anyone, particularly persons with disabilities.

- Our Office will encourage staff members to familiarize themselves with the Diversity Office's Inclusion Lens.

- Our Office will continue to monitor and respond to complaints and feedback from the general public and OPS staff. We will continue to have complaint forms so that the public can file complaints within the Office at the reception area, via telephone, internet, standard mail, and/or e-mail.

- Our Office will continue to offer all options to the general public, persons with disabilities, and OPS staff so they can choose a suitable method to contact our Office.

Employment

- The Office of the French Language Services Commissioner is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain talented employees with disabilities.

- The OFLSC as a Crown Agency worked closely with the MGS Recruitment Centre to eliminate all potential of barriers in employment policies, processes and practices.

- The OFLSC will continue to cooperate and seek guidance from the MGS Recruitment Centre to eliminate all potential barriers in employment policies, processes and practices.

- As part of the hiring process, the OFLSC will continue to inform its candidate(s) that accommodation is available upon request; and that we will provide accommodations to all applicants during the entire hiring process. All new staff are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Act. Training, such as the "How May I help You" module will continue to be mandatory for new staff.

Built Environment

The Office of the French Language Services Commissioner is committed to greater accessibility in, out of, and around the buildings we use.

Newly built offices are designed to be compliant with the AODA.

- Our Office is considering seeking funding from the Diversity Office to install automatic doors to assist people with disabilities. Currently, the entrance door has a "buzz" button to allow staff to assist the general public with reduced mobility.

- The Office will continue to encourage staff and management to excel in the area of customer service.

- The entire office space was designed to be wheelchair accessible.

- Each individual office space was designed to be wheelchair accessible.

- The office is situated on the 24th floor, on the south west corner of Bay and Gerrard Street West; therefore it has a full spectrum of natural light throughout the office.

- The Office has a complaint mechanism in place which was created and enforced since 2010. So far, we have not received any complaints from the general public or from stakeholders.

Procurement

The Office of the French Language Services Commissioner is committed to integrating accessibility considerations into our procurement processes. We ask potential suppliers to tell us about the accessible options they offer. We include accessibility in our evaluation criteria.

- The Office will continue to seek guidance from MGS for the inclusion of AODA in its procurement practices.

- The Office will continue to ensure Accessibility requirements are embedded into the Office's RFPs and all new contracts.

Section Three: Review of Acts, Regulations and Policies

In support of our commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner will continue to review government initiatives, including legislation and policies, to identify and remove barriers.

Inclusion Lens

In 2011, the Ontario Public Service launched the Inclusion Lens. The Lens is an innovative tool to help address diversity and accessibility. With this tool, ministries can identify and address potential barriers to people with disabilities, and others that may be present in existing or proposed legislation, policies, programs, practices or services.

In April 2011, the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner participated in a training session for multidisciplinary teams from all ministries on how to use the OPS Inclusion Lens to review laws for accessibility barriers. Going forward, the OPS Diversity Office and the Ministry of the Attorney General are working together to support a coordinated approach to legislative review across government.

Glossary of Terms/Acronyms

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

FLSC – French Language Services Commissioner

OPS – Ontario Public Service

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards

For More Information

Questions or comments about the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario accessibility plan are always welcome.

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Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web portal. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone.

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